

IRTS Radio News Bulletin Sunday August 22th 2021

SDR Radio Net livestreamed on YouTube

The South Dublin Radio Club HF net, which meets on Sunday mornings on 40 metres ahead of the radio news bulletin transmission, was livestreamed on Sunday last.

Adrian EI9HAB provided a ongoing commentary for viewers, explaining what amateur radio is about, the equipment he was using and the purpose of the club net. A link to a recording of this event is on the club's web site www.southdublinradioclub.ie

DX Féile 2021

Ireland's DX Convention is confirmed to be going ahead at the Aran Islands Hotel on Inishmore, County Galway, this September 24th and 25th. Although with a slightly shorter programme, this year promises to be another success with DX talks and presentations, the popular DX pile-up challenges, DX Quiz and raffle are just some of this year's attractions.

Rooms are selling out fast and interest is high as this is one of the few DX gatherings taking place this year. The Aran Islands Hotel with it's huge outdoor area and large marquees adhere to all governmental guidelines, and will endeavor to make DX Féile 2021 an enjoyable and safe weekend for all. Enquiries and bookings via www.eidxg.com , or via Dave's email ei9fbb /at/ gmail.com or phone 087 7444777

Contest Updates

Following a quiet month for contests in August, we want to mention a few upcoming contests in the month of September. The IRTS SSB Field Day takes place over the first weekend of the month, it runs for 24 hours from 1300 UTC on Saturday the 4th of September. For this contest there are separate 24-hour Open and Restricted sections, as well as a 6-hour restricted section. The restricted sections have a 100 watt power limit, and just one single-element antenna may be used. This Field Day coincides with similar field days in other European countries, so expect plenty of activity in the SSB contest segments of the HF bands.

Two weeks later, on Sunday the 19th of September, we have the 70 cms and 2 metres counties contests. The 70 cms event is just 30 minutes long, from 2.00 pm to 2.30 pm local time, and this is followed by a 90 minute 2 metres contest, running from 2.30 pm

to 4.00 pm local time. Both contests have mixed mode SSB/FM and FM-only sections. Full details are at www.irts.ie/contests Please note in particular the permitted SSB frequencies and FM channels, also the QSY Rule that applies to FM channels only.

We also want to bring to your attention a recent rule change affecting all IRTS contests: the rule prohibiting self-spotting has been extended to cover everyone present during the set-up or operation of a station, irrespective of whether they are listed as operators of the station. The new wording is in Rule 5.10 of the General Rules. This change is designed to encourage all involved in a contest station to recognise that radio contesting is a test of radio operating skills and not a test of Internet connectivity!

Also in September, a new series of the UKEICC Wednesday evening 80 metres contests begins, with an SSB event on Wednesday 1st September. These one-hour contests start at 2000 UTC, with SSB on the first Wednesday of the month, and CW on the last Wednesday of the month. The exchange is simply your 6-character Grid locator. Logs must be uploaded within an hour of the contest end time, and results are published shortly afterwards. Logging, checking and a timely upload is made easy by using the excellent SD contest logging program published by Paul O'Kane, Ei5DI. These short contests have become very popular among EI operators, as they are timed to coincide with the hours of darkness over most of the UK, Ireland and Europe. They are open to all stations anywhere to enter. The scoring is distance based, similar to the very successful 160m Stew Perry Contest. The 2021-22 series runs until April 2022, with 7 contests on SSB and 7 contests on CW. For more Information about this very friendly contest have a look at www.ukeicc.com

RTE on Long Wave 252 kHz back On Air

RTE carried out essential maintenance of the Long Wave transmitter in Clarkstown, Co. Meath for two months during which period RTE Radio 1 was not available on 252 kHz. This essential maintenance of the transmitter was due to be carried out in 2020, but was postponed due to Covid-19 restrictions. For the health and safety of those carrying out the works, the transmitter had to be switched off for the works period. Any overhaul has to be completed during the summer months when there is good light and weather conditions.

Transmissions commenced once again last Monday with an output of 500 kiloWatt during daytime and 100 kiloWatt at nighttime. During this shutdown, one could receive Radio Algeria transmitting on the same frequency with 1.5 megaWatt during the day and 750 kiloWatt at night, broadcasting a varied program.

On the HF bands

Until Sunday midnight there is a chance to catch some of the 343 activated lighthouses and lightships who registered during this year's International Lighthouse and Lightship Weekend, with the Hook Lighthouse activated by EI2WRC, and EI1E is on the air from Youghal.

And beginning next weekend, until the 3rd of September, four belgium hams will shelter on the Ile Saint Marcouf, one of two small uninhabited islands off the northern coast of Normandy. They will need good weather on the exposed rocks for a successful activation of IOTA EU-081. Their callsign is TM3U and they will be using all modes, on all bands from 80m to 6m.

IW5BBV has been heard several times as CN2BBV from Morocco from various locations during his travels across the country. Bruno is using SSB, and a roofrack mounted vertical on his 4-by-4 is putting out strong signals on 20m. He says that he will also be active on 40m until end of this month.

Ken, EA5/G4VZV is going truly portable, having mounting his HF equipment on a sack trolley, complete with a set of wire radials. Hauling it around by hand, his setup takes advantage of the excellent ground conditions at the salt lagoons in southeastern Spain. He is currently operating from the grid squares IM98QC, IM98QD and IM98QE on 10m to 40m. A Twitter feed under his homecall G4VZV gives QTH and QRG for each activation on various dates until the end of September.

Masa, JA0RQV has gone the extra mile to be qrv from Tonga by first checking into a quarantine hotel for the past three weeks. He has now arrived on Tongatapu Island OC-049 to install his antennas for 80m to 6m. Listen for A35JP on all modes from this weekend until late autumn. QSL via LoTW and Club Log.

Matthew, M0ZMS, operating as VP8ZMS is on air for a few more days from the RAF station at Mount Pleasant on the Falkland Islands. He is using digital modes, CW and occasionally SSB. QSL via home call and LoTW, logsearch on Club Log.

Phil, M7CBK is currently operating as ZC4CBK out of the Akrotiri Sovereign Base Area on Cyprus, grid square KM64LN, and he plans to be QRV on a regular basis until October. QSL via EB7DX.

Gerard, G3WIP is active until end of September as ZD7GB from St Helena. He works there as a doctor and will be active during his spare time.

The Propagation Horoscope

With just one weak active region frizzling out before moving into central view, the sun's x-ray flux has only moderately increased to class C flare activity. The proton flux is still quiet at a steady s0 with around only five particles per cubic centimeter. The geomagnetic Kp index hovers just above two, so the crystal ball says that no significant solarstorms and resulting auroras are to be expected in the coming days. This translates into moderate to fair DX on 40 to 20m, also check for multihop signals via the E-layer from both South Atlantic coasts on 17m and above until late evening. The lower HF bands are only limited by lightning induced crashes from around Europe and the Mediteranian, expect fair to good conditions on 80m and topband in the higher latitudes. Thankfully, the nights are getting longer. Unfortunately, that also means that we are coming to the end of the tropo season. But for now, there is hope above 30 Mhz, because a high pressure area is building over Scotland and the Northern Sea. Turn your VHF and UHF beams east and look for tropo and ducting, not only into Scandinavia and the Baltics, but also towards central Europe.

News From The News Team

Angus Sealy EI5IIB has joined our team of IRTS radio news readers, and anyone within range of the repeaters of the Limerick and Clare Amateur Radio Club will be able to hear him on the weekly news roster, transmitted on Monday evenings at 20:00 local time. The weekly radio news can now be heard on five bands, while a growing number of volunteers form rotas to ensure a reliable service. If you want to exercise your reading skills and handle a pile-up of listeners calling in afterwards, please come forward, jump into the deep end and join the IRTS radio news team. This involves taking turns reading the news bulletins on HF or on one of the local repeaters and repeater networks. Even if you cannot commit to a regular schedule, it is just as important to have a reserve of extra volunteers, because unforseen things do happen. Change is good, so give it a try.

That is the news for this week. Items for inclusion in next week's radio news can be submitted by email to newsteam /at/ irts.ie for automatic forwarding to both the radio and printed news services. The deadline is midnight on Friday.

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